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ABSTRACT

This module contains the outline, handouts, and transparency masters for a workshop designed to introduce teachers to stress management techniques, particularly through the use of peer support groups. The most effective format for this workshop is to present it as a three hour mini-workshop to a group of teachers who normally work together in the same school. It is essential that the physical and social setting of the workshop be relaxed and conducive to the personal and professional growth of the participants. Forms are provided for personal evaluation, and suggestions are made for avioding stress. A brief bibliography of suggested readings on stress management is included. (JD)

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STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHERS:

A WORKSHOP GUIDE WITH

HANDOUTS AND TRANSPARENCY MASTERS

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Preface

This module contains the outline, handouts and transparency masters for a workshop designed to introduce teachers to stress management techniques, particularly through the use of peer support groups. The ideas presented here were derived from the work of Dennis Sparks, Majorie Ingram, Edward Iwanicki, Barbara Scaros and other practitioners who have willingly shared their expertise in the professional literature.

The flexible format of this workshop has been used with a variety of time frames and audiences. However, it appears to be most effective when presented as a three hour mini-workshop to a group of teachers who normally work together in the same school. It is, of course, essential that the physical and social setting of the workshop be relaxed and conducive to the personal and professional growth of the participants.

Rationale, suggestions and resources for additional workshops on stress management for teachers can be found in Bradley, C. & Friedenberg, J. Stress in trade and industrial education: A Discussion and some suggestions. Journal of Industrial Teacher Education (1985) in-press.

STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHERS

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

Introduction

A brief statement on the role of stress in our high-pressure world. Teachers, individually and collectively, already have many of the resources needed to confront the problem of excessive teacher stress and teacher burnout.

Goals of the Workshop

* Identify sources of teacher stress
* Identify sources of teacher job satisfaction and job related strengths
* Formulate a tenative plan and action steps to prevent or alleviate teacher stress

Starting With an Up-Beat

Have participants list their successes and strengths (on page 1). When they have done this, have them share their lists with others who may add positive comments as appropriate.

Summarize: It is all too common for distressed educators to forget the motivation and goals that brought them into professional education, and to lose touch with the satisfactions that they receive from their work.

Stress Analysis

(The purpose of this activity is to move from vague concerns to concrete, specific causes of stress.)

Have participants complete the stress inventory (p.2) in the following manner:

1. List those things that cause stress for you on the job.

2. Then code each item, one at a time.
   A. Who is involved?
   B. Where does this occur?
   C. How frequently does it happen?
   D. How much control do you have over the situation?
3. Check (✔) those items for which you think you have a solution or are hopeful about.
4. Place an asterisk (*) next to the three situations you would most like to resolve.
5. Complete the "I learned..." statements at the bottom of the page.
6. Discuss the "I learned..." statements in small groups.

Stress Management Overview

The outline on pp.3 to 8 is used for participants to take notes as the facilitator presents a lecturette on stress and stress management techniques.

Have participants experience progressive relaxation during the discussion of techniques. The final technique presented is "support groups". After discussion of support groups, use the "Peer Support" activity (pp 9-10) to begin establishing support groups. If it seems appropriate, have volunteers read their agreement (contract) at the bottom of page 10 at the end of this activity.

Summary

Briefly review stress management techniques and "Helpful Hints to Handle Your Day" (p.11). Conclude the workshop with a reminder that we, individually and collectively, do indeed have the resources needed to confront the problem of teacher stress and teacher burn-out. All that is needed is to apply what we already know.

SUCCESSES AND STRENGTHS

One way to overcome sources of stress and frustration on the job is to focus on the positive things we do.

SUCCESSES

In the spaces provided below, list the successes and satisfying experiences you have had on the job.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

STRENGTHS

In the spaces provided below, list personal and professional strengths you have of which you are most proud.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

STRESS INVENTORY

Before you can truly begin to cope with stress, you must first focus on those situations which are stressful for you. This stress inventory will enable you to look closely at these situations, who is involved in them, and how much control you have over them.

Fill in the inventory using the key at the bottom and then look over and answer the questions at end.

STRESS SITUATION	WHO	WHERE	FREQUENCY	CONTROL

KEY

Who is involved?	Where does this stress occur?	How frequently does it occur?	Degree of Control you have over the situation
S=students	C=classroom/ laboratory	A=always	HC=high level of control
C=colleagues	L=lounge	O=often	SC=some control
A=administrators	O=office	S=seldom	NC=no control
P=parents	H=hallways		
M=me alone			

I learned from this inventory that _____

_____

I was surprised that _____

_____

7

STRESS MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The word "stress" has acquired two different meanings:

1.

2.

What Stress is

Stress is the body's way of preparing for emergency action when faced with a threatening or unfamiliar situation. The emergency action with which the body prepares itself includes temporarily increasing its strength and energy, and its defenses against diseases, all of which helps it to overcome dangers and challenges.

Medical experts agree that

Causes of Stress

The forces that cause stress are called _____.
Examples include

It is important to note that all _____ may cause a similar physiological reaction. This reaction is known as stress response.

The Stress Response

Dr. Hans Selye, an internationally recognized expert on stress, has identified three stages of stress:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Remember that the stress response can be the same regardless of the stressor. A problem arising from this important fact is that the stress response may prepare an individual for dangers that are not present. For example, stress heightens bodily defenses against germs, whether or not the person is sick.

How Stress Affects the Body

The human body constantly strives to keep all of its systems in balance. This state of balance, known as equilibrium or homeostasis, is essential to our well-being. Forces that cause stress disrupt equilibrium and require the body to use adaptive energy. Each of us has a finite amount of adaptive energy, when this is gone, there is no more, death follows.

Some very common stress symptoms serve as danger signals of forthcoming stress damage to the body:

Individual Differences

Although the physiological reaction can be the same for all stressors, individuals' psychological or emotional reactions do vary. What causes great pressure for one person may only cause minor difficulty for another person. A person's response or ability to handle stressors may be influenced by

1.

2.

3.

Specific traits and attitudes such as the following can increase negative reaction to stress:

Three Negative Ways of trying to cope with stress

1.

2.

3.

Long-Term Stress Protection

Self-Awareness

HOLMES-RAHE STRESS TEST

RANK	EVENT	VALUE	YOUR SCORE
1.	Death of spouse	100	
2.	Divorce	73	
3.	Marital separation	65	
4.	Jail term	63	
5.	Death of close family member	63	
6.	Personal injury or illness	53	
7.	Marriage	50	
8.	Fired from work	47	
9.	Marital reconciliation	45	
10.	Retirement	45	
11.	Change in family member's health	44	
12.	Pregnancy	40	
13.	Sex difficulties	39	
14.	Addition to family	39	
15.	Business readjustment	39	
16.	Change in financial status	38	
17.	Death of close friend	37	
18.	Change in # of marital arguements	35	
19.	Mortgage or loan over $10,000.	31	
20.	Foreclosure of mortgage or loan	30	
21.	Change in work responsibilities	29	
22.	Son or daughter leaving home	29	
23.	Trouble with in-laws	29	
24.	Outstanding personal achievement	28	
25.	Spouse begins or starts work	26	
26.	Starting or finishing school	26	
27.	Change in living conditions	25	
28.	Revision of personal habits	25	
29.	Trouble with boss	23	
30.	Change in work hours, conditions	25	
31.	Change in residence	20	
32.	Change in schools	20	
33.	Change in recreational habits	19	
34.	Change in church activities	19	
35.	Change in social activities	18	
36.	Mortgage or loan under $10,000.	18	
37.	Change in sleeping habits	16	
38.	Change in # of family gatherings	15	
39.	Change in eating habits	15	
40.	Vacation	13	
41.	Christmas season	12	
42.	Minor violation of the law	11	
	TOTAL		

Personal Planning

Nutrition

Exercise

To be most effective in minimizing the negative effects of stress, exercise must be _____, _____ and _____.

Good examples of effective exercise include _____, _____ _____, _____, _____, and _____.

Important Considerations:

1.

2.

3.

Relaxation

Physical and mental relaxation can be described as the opposite of anxiety and tension. It is almost impossible for you to respond with anxiety and tension when your mind and body are relaxed. Therefore, relaxation is very effective in minimizing the negative effects of stress. Fortunately, there are many ways to achieve relaxation.

1. Progressive Relaxation

2. Meditation

3. Hypnotism

4. Biofeedback

5. Others

Support Groups

PEER SUPPORT

An effective method of handling and preventing stress is through developing a support system. At times of stress, it is essential to discuss our difficulties with one or more individuals in whom we have confidence and trust. Discussion helps one to identify, clarify and define the problem. The following group process can be helpful in starting an on-going support system with friends and colleagues and in using others' insights to focus on those aspects of our jobs which are stressful.

Procedure:

1. Form a support group of 4-6 peers.

2. One person (focus person) discuss a problem (challenge) that he/she is having on the job.

3. The support group asks clarifying questions until the entire group understands the challenge. (Record suggestions on p.10)

4. The support group then brainstorms possible suggestions. The focus person records all suggestions without comments or questions.

5. In the next phase, the focus person has the opportunity to clarify any/all of the brainstormed suggestions.

6. The remainder of the time is used in helping the focus person determine a contract that is based on the suggestions elicted during the brainstorming.

7. New time for additional support for the focus person is scheduled.

8. A new member of the support group becomes the focus person and the above steps are repeated.

CHALLENGE SHEET

Date _____

CHALLENGE _____

_____

_____

BRAINSTORMED SUGGESTIONS

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

AGREEMENT

I, _____ will _____

_____

_____

_____

_____ by _____

SUPPORT PERSONS: SIGNATURE _____

_____

_____

_____

HELPFUL HINTS TO HANDLE YOUR DAY

1. GET UP EARLIER in order to allow yourself more time before you get to work.

2. BEFORE entering your school pause to look around outside -- what kind of day is it? what kind of clouds are in the sky? what birds? etc.

3. TRY TO PAY LESS ATTENTION TO TIME -- Pace yourself, but try to avoid "planned pressure".

4. REGULATE how many items you put on your "To Do" list and prioritize them.

5. DURING LUNCH OR BREAKS: Avoid discussing business, eat slowly, take your full lunch period.

6. GO TO LUNCH with an enthusiastic staff member.

7. MAKE A LIST of your "Hyper Habits", share it with a friend to be sure you've included everything, then make a contract to alter some specific behaviors.

8. FIND A SPECIFIC PLACE on your campus where you can go to sit quietly for 5 minutes or pick out a brief walk nearby.

9. COMPOSE written reminders for yourself and place them where you will read them. Example: "I am going to slow down today and I will feel better because of it".

10. BE WILLING TO SAY "NO" when you need to.

11. ASK FOR HELP!

12. FOCUS ON an immediate goal, especially one that you enjoy, and work on it until it is completed.

13. Try a New Activity.

14. COLLECT APPRECIATION that is due you -- visit some people who help make you feel good.

15. WHEN YOU'RE "DOWN AND OUT" -- make a list of all the reasons you don't need to be -- the vacation you're planning, why you are in this job and what you like about it, friends you've met, etc.

16. KEEP TRACK of your "down" moods on a calendar, if cycles can be traced -- prepare for them!

17. RE-ENERGIZE YOURSELF through relaxation techniques or meditation.

18. TALK to a "significant other".

19. PAY ATTENTION to your health, diet, and sleep. If you "don't have the time", ask yourself if you have the time to be sick!

20. EXERCISE DAILY!!!

SUGGESTED READINGS ON STRESS MANAGEMENT

Understanding Stress

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Exercise

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BURN-OUT
APATHY
FRUSTRATION
STAGNATION
ENTHUSIASM

POSSIBLE CAUSES OF DISTRESS

RELATIONSHIPS

POWERLESS FEELING

ROLE CONFLICT

LIFE CHANGES

LIFE STAGES

INTERNAL SOURCES

SOME THINGS YOU MUST BE WILLING TO ACCEPT

* REALITY

* RESPONSIBILITY

* PEER SUPPORT

CUES THAT CAN TELL US ANXIETY IS RISING

COLD EXTREMITIES

ANGRY FEELINGS

SHOULDERS TENSE

CONFUSED FEELING

BREATHLESSNESS

FLUSHING

TEARY FEELING

DISTRACTIBILITY

RAPID HEART BEAT

IRRITABILITY

RAPID RESPIRATIONS

HEADACHE

SHAKY VOICE

STOMACH TENSE

NECK TENSE

HEAVY CHEST

DRY MOUTH

NAUSEA

LOSS OF TRAIN OF THOUGHT

WHAT IS STRESS?

HOW STRESS AFFECTS THE BODY

STRESS RESPONSE

1. ALARM

2. ADAPTATION

3. EXHAUSTION

CAUSES OF STRESS

NEGATIVE WAYS OF COPING

STRESS MANAGEMENT

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

LONG-TERM PROTECTION

- SELF-AWARENESS
- PERSONAL PLANNING
- NUTRITION
- EXERCISE
- RELAXATION
- SUPPORT GROUPS